CONRAD DERSCH FAMILY
A History

Written on November 11-12, 2000
Revised 2003, 2015, 2017, 2024
and April 14, 2025
by

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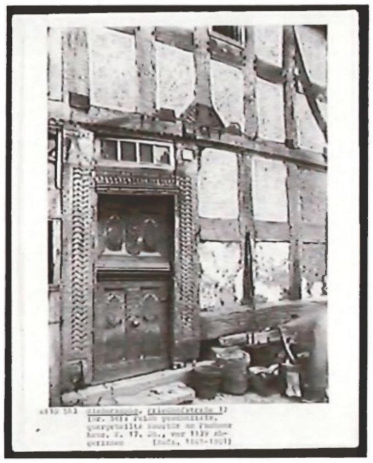
MICHAEL DERSCH

Michael Dersch was probably born in December 1733 and died May 23, 1791 in Niederasphe, Hessen, Germany. He married Anna Katharina Mengel, who had come from the neighboring village of Mittel-Simtshausen. Anna died May 14, 1822 in house No. 44 in Caldern, Hessen, Germany, where she had been living with the family of her son, Hermann. Michael was a carpenter. According to a letter from Dr. Ulrich Stöhr from Bottendorf, Germany dated May 14th 2001, "Father Michael Dersch is definitely identical to the "Grebe" (kind of mayor) Michael Dersch who died May 23rd 1791 at the age of 57 years and 5 months. This would mean that he was survived by his widow who died in Caldern 1822 for more than 30 years. According to his death entry Michael Dersch should have been born December 1733. The problem is that there's no appropriate birth date in the registers… It's probable that "Grebe" Michael Dersch was identical to that Johann Michael Dersch who was baptized September 19th 1734 as son of Jacob Dersch and his wife Katharina born Engelbach but so far there's no conclusive evidence at hand." In a letter dated Oct 3rd 2002, Dr. Stöhr says that "a cadastre volume of about 1785 shows Michael Dersch as a carpenter who owned not more than 10 3/8 Acker 14 3/8 Ruten land property (1 Acker=about 1 acre, 1 Rute=about 1 square rod) and 2 cows as well as 10 sheep. His farm can be identified and its site might be shown to you if you can visit us sometime. As I told you his presumed eldest son Johannes has left Niederasphe about 1806. This is the year when most of his former property was sold or left to new owners among them whom we find a Johann Jost Dersch and a Hermann Dersch, maybe sons resp. brothers."



At right is a photo of the front on the home of Michael Dersch who lived in House No. 56, Niederasphe, Hessen, Germany. This photo was taken many years ago by a photographer in Germany who took photos of ornate buildings, etc. Unfortunately, this house no longer exists.

The seven children of Michael Dersch and Anna Katharina Mengel Dersch are:

Johannes Dersch

(In his letter dated Oct 3rd 2002, Dr. Ulrich Stöhr states: "Obviously there was a further, oldest son Johannes who was confirmated in 1784. He seems to have inherited his parents' house in 1793 but later on obviously in 1806 he moved to the neighbor village Obersimtshausen. This disbandment of the family's household in Niederasphe may be the reason why Hermann Dersch took his mother with him or at least let her come to Caldern in later years".)

Hermann Dersch	b. April 24, 1771	
Johann Henrich Dersch	b. March 11, 1775	
Johann Hermann Dersch	b. Abt. March 13, 1778; d. March 3, 1798	
Johann Jost Dersch	b. December 1780	

(He was confirmed in 1794)

Hermann Dersch	b. July 20, 1783 in house No. 56 in Niederasphe; married Maria Schneider August 18, 1811 Caldern; d. June 15, 1840 in Caldern	
Dorothea Dersch	b. July 19, 1786	d. February 11, 1788

HERMANN DERSCH

Hermann Dersch was born in Niederasphe, Hessen, Germany on July 20, 1783 and died on June 15, 1840 in Caldern, Hessen, Germany. He was the son of Michael and Anna Katharina (Mengel) Dersch of Niederasphe. Hermann married Maria Schneider, the daughter of Johannes Schneider and Katharina Pfeifer who lived in house No. 44 in Caldern, on August 18, 1811 in Caldern. According to Caldern Church records, information provided to me by Dr. Ulrich Stöhr in August 2000, Herrmann was a carpenter and "died in Caldern June 15th 1840 in the sequel of his drinking-habit. In later years he had been engaged as a subaltern forest-ranger of the university in Marburg which owned great real estate around the village Caldern derived from the former cistercian nun monastery there having become a part of that university's first endowment after Reformation in Hessia in 1527. The wife of Herrmann, Maria Schneider, was born in Caldern December 18th 1789 and died there as a widow in house No. 44 March 11th 1860."

The eight children of Herrmann Dersch and Maria Schneider, all born in Caldern and are as follows:

Johannes	b. Apr. 1, 1812	d. Jan. 11, 1877 in Caldern

(He was born at 3:00 a.m. His godfather was J. Schneider, a subordinate forest ranger and his grandfather. He was confirmed in 1826 in Caldern)

Johannes b. Jan. 26, 1814 d. Feb. 2, 1873 in Caldern

(He was born at 3:00 a.m. also. The godfather was J. Dersch, a joiner's journeyman in Amoenau. The godmother was Anna Katharina Schneider, the mother's sister. He was confirmed in 1828 in Caldern)

Katharina (Catherine) b. Apr. 12, 1817 d. about Dec. 8, 1889 in Clay County, Indiana

(She was born at 2:00 in the afternoon. The godmother was the mother's unmarried sister, unnamed but probably the same Anna Katharina Schneider as above. She was confirmed in 1831 in Caldern. She emigrated to the United States with her son, Konrad, in 1866.)

Elisabeth b. Nov. 10, 1819 d. April 25, 1822 in Caldern

(She was born at 12:00 midnight. The godmother was E. Pfeifer, her grandmother's sister in Caldern)

Gerlach b. Sep. 22, 1822 d. October 16, 1887

(He was born at 1:00 p.m. The godfather was G. Schneider in Caldern. He was confirmed in 1836)

(NOTE: Gerlach came to the United States and changed his name to Gerhard. He is buried in the old Kratzburg Trinity Church cemetery, now known as (Kratzburg) Trinity United Church of Christ in Spencer County, Indiana near the town of Fulda. His gravesite is next to his brother, John Dersch, who was born in 1827 in Caldern and died May 9, 1904 in Spencer County, Indiana. The gravestone says that Gerhard Dersch died on October 16, 1887 at the age of 66 years)

Johann Conrad b. July 13, 1825 d. March 6, 1826 in Caldern

(He was born at 8:00 a.m. The godfather was the unmarried J. C. Pfeifer)

Johannes b. March 2, 1827 in house No. 44 in Caldern
married Margaretha Keller February 6, 1860 in Spencer Co., Indiana
d. May 9, 1904 in Spencer County, Indiana

(He was born at 11:00 a.m. The godfather was the unmarried J. vorm Schlag (Vormschlag) from Kernbach. He was confirmed in 1841 in Caldern)

According to the book "Keller and Allied Families", a copy of which can be seen at the Vigo County Public Library in Terre Haute, Indiana, John came to America in 1857. John and Margaet Keller were married by Andreas Miller, Pastor of Ev. St. Paul's Cong. Their marriage record can be found in the Spencer County, Indiana County Clerk's office at the Rockport, Indiana Courthouse.

John served his country during the Civil War in Company K, 44th Indiana Infantry and received a pension. His wife, Margaretha, received a widow's pension after John's death.

John is buried at the Kratzburg Trinity Church cemetery in Spencer County.

Katharina	b. Dec. 28, 1829 d. Nov. 20, 1852 in Caldern

> (She was born at 2:00 a.m. The godmother was K. Schmitt, the eldest daughter of the late tenant of the monastery's estate. "Katharina (b. 1829) died as a servant Nov. 20th 1852 in childbed after the same day she had given birth to a stillborn illegitimate son." (Source: Dr. Ulrich Stoehr's letter dated Oct 3rd 2002))

CATHERINE DERSCH

Katharina Dersch was born on April 12, 1817 in house #44 in Caldern, Hessen, Germany. According to Caldern Church records information provided by Dr. Ulrich Stöhr, "So you see: Katharina (born April 12, 1817) was no widow at all but a single person. She was born in Caldern house No. 44 - as one can assume - as the third of totally eight children of the carpenter Herrmann Dersch and his wife Maria born Schneider April 12th 1817." Ulrich continues: "This woman was never married at all - at least not until her emigration - and thus gave birth to three illegitimate children: Gerlach (December 14th, 1839) whose father was a man named Heinrich Dammshaeuser from nearby Michelbach; Johannes (February 2nd 1843); that Konrad (Conrad)..., all born in her parents' house No. 44. Gerlach, Johannes and Konrad grew up in Caldern and were confirmed there. Gerlach married May 26th1867 as a daylabourer Maria Meisel from Ockershausen near Marburg but died already - childless - in the clinical hospital in Marburg July 14th1870. There is no hint that he might have served as a soldier. Maybe Johannes could have served in the army but so far I've got no information about his fate after confirmation in 1857." Also, "That Konrad Dersch was actually born January 14th1850 midday between 11 and 12 o'clock in house No. 44 as the son of the unmarried Katharina Dersch." Ulrich goes on to say: "It's remarkable that she had not less than three brothers who bore the christian name Johannes: Two older brothers (April 1st 1812 resp. January 26th 1814) who both remained in Caldern and married there and a younger one who was born March 2nd 1827, a date John Earl Dersch already came to know. So this man has been an uncle of that Conrad."

House No. 44 in
Caldern (now called Lahntal),
Hessen, Germany, still exists

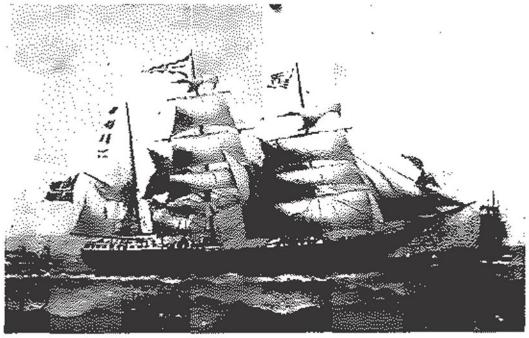
The children of Katharina Dersch were born in Caldern and are:

Gerlach	b. Dec. 14, 1839 Caldern	d. July 14, 1870 hospital in Marburg, Germany married: Maria Meisel, no children
Johannes	b. Feb. 2, 1843 Caldern	
Konrad	b. Jan. 14, 1850 Caldern	d. Jan. 15, 1924 in Vigo County, Indiana married: Margaretha Huebner & Cora Reffett

CONRAD DERSCH

According to information from Caldern, Hessen, Germany Church records, provided by Dr. Ulrich Stoehr, Conrad was born at midday between 11:00 and 12:00 o'clock in house No. 44 as the son of the unmarried Katharina Dersch. Conrad grew up in Caldern and was confirmed there but no date is given. Dersch family history information, provided by Margaret Peggy Riley Kennedy (granddaughter of Julia Dersch), says that Conrad never knew who his father was and that there was never any mention of him and that when Conrad came to the U.S he had two brothers left over in Germany.

Katharina Dersch and her 16-year-old son, Konrad, left Caldern, Hessen, Germany and headed for the United States of America in 1866. They boarded the ship **Herzogin Von Brabant** on or about April 14, 1866 at Bremmen, Germany and landed at New York on June 9th. Conrad's Declaration of Intention to become a U.S. citizen states that they arrived in the United States on June 11, 1866. They arrived and processed through the Castle Garden Immigration Center, now known as Castle Clinton, in New York and the documentation from there mentions that they said their final destination was "New Boston" in the U.S. New Boston, Indiana is the area where Catherine's brother, John Dersch who immigrated about 1857, was living at the time. It must be noted here that on immigration records their last name is spelled Doersch. Obviously there had been earlier communication between Catherine in Germany and her brother John Dersch who already lived in Spencer County, Indiana.



Herzogin Von Brabant

Catharine and Conrad settled in Cannelton, Perry County, Indiana to be close to Catharine's brother, Johannes Dersch (born March 2, 1827), whose family lived on a farm in nearby Spencer County, Indiana. Catharine and Conrad are listed in the 1870 census with Conrad working in the Cotton Mill in Cannelton. Also working in the Cotton Mill at that time was Margaretha Huebner, daughter of Augustus and Caroline (Habsmeyer, Meyers) Huebner. Conrad and Margaret were married on Christmas day, 1871 in Perry County, Indiana by the Rev. Louis Miller. Margaret's father, August Huebner, was a trustee for the German Methodist Church in Cannelton in 1855.

Louis Miller was born on September 21, 1829 at Alsace and died on August 23, 1933 in Mt. Vernon, Indiana at the age of 103. He came to America at 10 years of age and lived in Posey County, Indiana. In 1855 he entered the ministry and was given a ministry within 2 miles of his father. He was the pastor of the German Methodist Church at German Ridge in 1871. (This information was found on a Perry County, Indiana website.)

When Margaretha Sophia Dersch, daughter of Catherine's brother John Dersch of Spencer County, was christened at the Kratzburg Trinity Church of Spencer County in 1874, her godparents were Konrad and Margaret Dersch.

Conrad and Margaret bought part of Lot #135, situated on Taylor and Church streets in Cannelton, for the sum of $600 on October 18, 1877. Conrad then bought another part of Lot #135 for $50 on August 31, 1880. Conrad and Margaret and their family moved to the Clay County, Indiana area before July 28, 1881, the date that they sold their parts of Lot #135 with the deed stating that they were citizens of Clay County, Indiana.

Conrad submitted his Declaration of Intention to become a citizen of the U.S. in 1874 at the Clay County, Indiana courthouse at Bowling Green. This Declaration was signed and recorded by the Clay County Clerk on October 17, 1874. Conrad became a U.S. citizen and was sworn in at the Circuit Court of Perry County, Indiana at Cannelton on August 13, 1878.

A question may arise as to why Conrad was in Clay County in 1874. Margaret's parents, Augustus and Caroline Huebner, had moved to Brazil, Indiana in 1872. Perhaps Conrad and Margaret were visiting the Clay County area for a time before returning to Cannelton. At any rate Conrad and Margaret, and their early family including mother Catharine, are recorded in the 1880 Indiana census as living in Cannelton.

Conrad and Margaret and their family, including their children John Christian and Anna C. and mother Catharine, moved to Brazil, Clay County, Indiana in 1881.

It is known that in the years that followed 1881 and into the early 1900s there were visits between the two Dersch families. There are family stories that tell of visits to the Mathias Dersch farm in Spencer County which yielded wonderful fruits and vegetables. Uncle Math, as he was known, was a son of John Dersch of Spencer County.

Land Records at the Clay County Courthouse in Brazil, Indiana give the following transaction: Dersch, Maggie fr. L. E. McClelland / Warranty Deed / date of deed: 2-13-1882 / Amt. of Trans.: $265.00. Description of Lands" WNW NW Sec. 18, T12, R6 acres:4, recorded 2-15-1882 Book 28, p. 49: "a point on the Section line 255 feet North of the South West corner of the North West Quarter of the North West Quarter of Section Eighteen (18) Township Twelve (12) North, of Range Six West running thence East 810 1/2 feet thence North 215 feet thence West 810 1/2 feet thence South 215 feet to the place of beginning four (4) acres more or less..." This land was located south of Brazil along state highway 59.

In the Brazil area Conrad worked as a coal miner.

According to a Sherfey & Kidd Funeral Directors book, located at the Clay County, Indiana Genealogical Society in Center Point, Catharine died in December 1889 of asthma. At the present time the location of her grave is unknown. Margaret died on September 11, 1895 as a result of a buggy accident. A family story says that she was pregnant at the time. Margaret is buried in an unmarked grave in Wools Cemetery in Clay County, Indiana next to the marked grave of her mother, Caroline Huebner.

The children of Conrad and Margaret (Heubner) Dersch are:

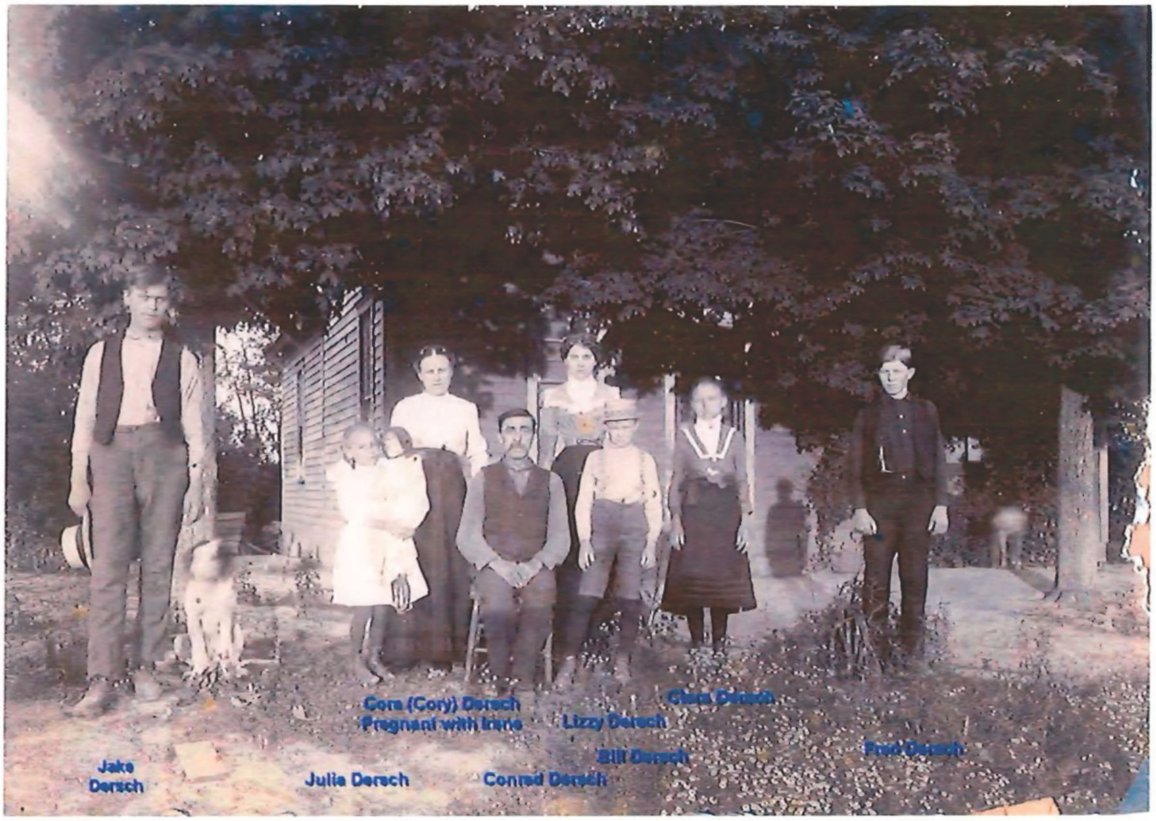
John Christian	b. Jan. 17, 1877	d. Oct. 7, 1919 in Vigo County, Indiana married: Lillie Ellen LaFollette
Anna C.	b. June 11, 1879	d. May 10, 1917 in East Chicago, Indiana married: James J. Brady
Jacob Peter	b. Nov. 1, 1882	d. December 3, 1914 N. of W. Terre Haute married: Lilloth G. Williams & Bertha M. Williams
Frederick Charles	b. Nov. 1, 1882	d. Single, Sept. 20, 1968 in Clay County, Indiana
Elizabeth Amelia	b. Feb. 23, 1885	d. February 1, 1959 in Brazil, Indiana married: William C. Craig
Clara Matilda	b. Dec. 10, 1887	d. May 7, 1957 in East Chicago, Indiana married: Raymond Cecil Boardway
William Conrad	b. Dec. 3, 1889	d. March 30, 1907 in Clay County, Indiana

(Billy died young. In the Clay County, Indiana death records, William's occupation was listed as a miner; disease causing death: Pernicious Anaemia; date of burial: April 1, 1907; the undertaker was Lansen C. Miller; the attending physician was Dr. Nall. William was buried at Cottage Hill Cemetery, Clay County, Indiana.)

Julia Edna	b. Apr. 17, 1893	d. Dec. 26, 1976 in Terre Haute, Indiana married: Daniel George Zerweck
August	?	
Laura	?	

After Margaret's death, Conrad married Cora Reffett on April 21, 1900 in Brazil, Indiana. The Clay County Enterprise, Brazil, Indiana, dated Thursday, April 26, 1900 says: "Miss Cora Reffett and Conrad Dersch, living three miles south of the city, were married Wednesday evening at 6 o'clock at the home of the bride. Justice Daniels performing the ceremony." Cora had four children by Conrad. In the 1900 census Conrad worked as a coal miner but in the 1908 Brazil City Directory his occupation is listed as a bartender and living at 134 S. Meridian. Later, he had his own business selling liquor in the Seelyville, Indiana area. Cora was the daughter of Littleton Reffett and his wife Lizzie (Sweeting). Cora was only 21 years old and Conrad was 50 at the time of their marriage. Conrad had met her while she was working as a waitress. This marriage didn't sit too well with Conrad's older children. According to family stories, the older brothers of Julia, the youngest of Conrad's and Margaret's children, took Julia out of Cora's custody shortly after Cora's marriage to Conrad. The reason for this was because Cora was considerably younger than Conrad and liked to visit the bars. Having no babysitter, Cora would take Julia with her. Julia's brothers were horrified and placed her with her older married sister, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Craig.

The marriage didn't last and the divorce between Conrad and Cora was finalized on June 16, 1908. Cora gave the reason of "cruel and inhuman treatment" as the cause for her wanting a divorce. Conrad was to pay Cora $8.00 a month child support. Cora retained custody of the four minor children. Court Docket #4654 Cora Dersch vs. Conrad Dersch.



Brazil Daily Times, Brazil, Indiana, Monday, February 28, 1910, pages 1 and 5:

"STIRRING SCENES AT THE FARMERS HOTEL
Conrad Dersch is Lying at Point of Death from a Blow by Foreigner.
Assailant has a Record
Been Implicated in Police Court Here Several Times – Claims Dersch Snapped Revolver in His Face Twice.

The charge of assault and battery with intent to kill, lodged against Albert Polaski, a foreigner about 35 or 40 years of age, of Jasonville, will be changed to manslaughter, if Conrad Dersch, of Glenaire, Polaski's victim, in a fierce battle in the old Farmers' Hotel, on East National Avenue, Sunday evening, succumbs. The duel occurred about five o'clock Sunday evening. Polaski is held in the county jail and Dersch is lying at the point of death in the Union Hospital at Terre Haute where he is suffering with concussion of the brain and a crushed skull. His sons, one of whom is Councilman John Dersch are with him. Dersch was still hanging onto life this afternoon but was unconscious and able to speak.

Dersch is beyond sixty years of age and is well known and said to be comfortably situated financially. By his first wife he was the father of several children who are regarded as being among Brazil's most highly respected and esteemed citizens, and the disgraceful affair throws the family into much undesired publicity.

The trouble was over some children, although it is said the quarrel Sunday which began the fracus is the result of a long-standing feud, of more than two years. It began when Dersch married a daughter of a prominent insurance agent here. The marriage was not approved by Dersch's children by his first wife and the boys have never lived at home since. Dersch lived with the woman several years and is the father of four children, the oldest of which is eight years and is in the public schools and the youngest about two. The woman claims that Dersch deserted her, going to Chicago and leaving her a few months before the last child was born, with no money for her support, and she was in such condition that she was unable to work and provide for the three children.

At that time, she claims Joseph Polaski, a vegetable peddler, came to the house to board and furnished money to pay her rent, and, seeing her condition, also provided food. Friends of Dersch, however, claim, that he did not leave her until she became intimate with Polaski. Mrs. Dersch secured a divorce through the court, by the decree of which Dersch was to provide money for the support of the children. She claims, however, that only one payment was made by him, and that Polaski who has been boarding at her apartments in the old Farmer's Hotel, paid her rent and also gave her other money. She claims that if it had not been for his assistance she would have gone to the poor house, since her four small children demanded so much of her time that she was unable to work.

Saturday afternoon Dersch and Polaski came over on the same car the 4:28 and both made a race to the Farmers Hotel. Dersch said that he came over to buy some clothing for the children while Polaski stated to Chief Brown that he had come back from Jasonville to get his clothes and miners' tools, since he had gone there to work. Dersch entered by the front door at the same time that Polaski came through the rear door. The two men met in the kitchen. There are two dingy rooms on the first floor, the front one being a sort of a general living room.

According to the story told the police by Mrs. Dersch, Dersch gave Polaski a scowl that showed that he meant harm. One of the children, the smallest of the four ran to Polaski and threw his arms around Polaski's legs. Polaski raised the child and carressed it. Dersch became angered at this and ordered Polaski to "Put that baby down."

"I don't have to, I have as much right to handle these kids as you do," replied Polaski.

At this juncture, according to the woman's story, Dersch thrust his right hand underneath his coat and drew a .32 calibre revolver from his pocket and pointing it in the face of Polaski pulled the trigger twice. The cartridges failed to explode and Polaski pounced on the old man, threw him to the floor with several blows and hurled the revolver at him. The weapon struck Dersch on the back of the head cutting a severe gash. Dersch, according to the woman's story, washed the blood from his head and remained at the house about an hour, and drank four bottles of beer from a sack which he had brought with him. After that he left and went west on National Avenue with the oldest of the girls. She left him at the Hub Shoe store. Polaski remained at the home. He was arrested there a few minutes later by Policemen Gabbert and Cureton, offering no resistance.

It is said that the story told by Dersch's little girl was to the effect that Polaski attacked her father, and the old man drew a revolver to protect himself. This frightened the child and she screamed, causing her father to turn his head when the big man struck him and knocked him down, taking the revolver and beating him.

Dersch was noticed by many. Blood streamed down his back and over his face, but he replied to all inquiries that he had fallen on the sidewalk. However, by this time, he was so weak from the loss of blood that he was unable to walk. The true state of affairs was then learned. Dersch was taken to the Union Hospital by his sons, who remained with him yesterday. At 8 o'clock last night he was able to recognize his son, John, but could not speak.

Polaski, according to Chief Brown, bears a bad police reputation. He has been arrested several times and is also said to have been involved in the case of Mrs. Frank Unger who committed suicide some time ago, and has been arrested on other charges. He was also in a fight with Ed. Reffert, about a year ago, and was seriously cut. When taken into custody yesterday a large dangerous looking knife was taken from him by the police.

The little child that started the trouble yesterday is a cute little child, and the other children are bright looking. The case calls the attention of Probation Officer Edward Scheutz and the children may be taken from her and taken to the children's home. The woman, too, is said to have a questionable character and is responsible for a great deal of the trouble. The police say that the two cartridges are indented, evidently having been touched by the trigger but did not explode, bearing out Polaski's and the woman's story."

Brazil Daily Times, Brazil, Indiana, Tuesday, March 1, 1910, page 1:

"LITTLE IMPROVED

A telephone dispatch from the Union Hospital at Terre Haute at noon today stated that Conrad Dersch, the man who was injured in the fight at the Farmer's Hotel on East National Avenue last Saturday evening is still lingering at the point of death with the chances of life very meager. It is stated that he is in a very serious condition. Mr. Dersch last night was slightly improved being able to sit up in his bed and eat a little food, but he is said to have suffered a relapse and is not so well today."

Brazil Daily Times, Brazil, Indiana, Wednesday, March 2, 1910, page 4:

"STILL IN DANGER

Chief of Police Brown and Councilman Dersch were in Terre Haute last evening to see Conrad Dersch, father of the councilman, who is in the Union Hospital through the assault made upon him by Polaski Sunday evening. The injured man, who is 68 years old, had recovered consciousness, and, while there was a slight improvement in his condition, Dr. Jett, who is attending him, says his condition is still critical and he is by no means out of danger. The Dr. said that none of the wounds were dangerous except the one in his head."

Brazil Weekly Democrat, Brazil, Indiana, Thursday morning, March 3, 1910:

"DERSCH IS MUCH BETTER TODAY

While he is not yet out of danger the physicians at the hospital believe that he will recover in a few weeks.

TALKS OF THE ASSAULT

Injured Man Tells A Different Story From That Of Poladnaski and Mrs. Dersch - Physicians Will Also Have Damaging Story to Tell and State is Confident of Convicting the Pole.

Marked improvement in the condition of Conrad Dersch is reported by his son, Councilman John Dersch and Chief of Police Brown who paid a visit to the injured man at the Union hospital at Terre Haute last evening. They found that Mr. Dersch was not only considerably improved but that he was conscious and able to converse about the trouble which resulted in his injury.

The story which Mr. Dersch tells differs in many respects from the explanation given by Albert Poladnaski and Mrs. Dersch of the trouble and will be a strong point for the state which will make a determined effort to convict the Pole on the charge of attempted murder if Dersch recovers.

Physicians at the hospital stated that while Mr. Dersch shows much improvement and that his chances for recovery were much better, he is not yet out of danger and that if he continues to improve without a backset it will be several weeks before he will be able to leave the hospital.

The physicians told Chief Brown and Councilman Dersch that the wounds on the injured man's head could not have been made with the butt of a revolver. The fractures of the skull show, according to the physicians, that some heavy instrument with a sharp edge was used and yet not a knife as it was not sharp enough to penetrate the inner lining of the brain or his death would have been instant.

The evidence of the physicians on this point will be a telling point against the story of the Pole that he threw the revolver at Dersch and that it struck him in the head. The wounds on Dersch's head show that he was struck several blows with some heavy, ___ narrow edged instrument and backed up with Dersch's account of the trouble the state should have no trouble in convincing a jury that Poladnaski made a murderous assault on the old man with intent to kill.

Deputy Prosecutor Lee appeared before Justice Mershon last evening and had Poladnaski's bond increased from $50 to $300 as it was apparent that some of the Pole's friends might come to his rescue with such a small bond and get him out if there appeared any danger of a prison sentence. The Pole has caused so much trouble here that the officials would be glad to get rid of him and they believe that they have sufficient evidence to send him over the road this time although he seems to have been charmed in the past and always escaped prosecution."

Brazil Weekly Democrat, Thursday morning, March 10, 1910:

"ASSAULT CASE IS POSTPONED
Albert Poladnaski Takes a Change of Venue and Case is Sent to Justice G. R. Schultz's Court.
DERSCH IS IMPROVING

Albert Poladnaski, the Pole who is charged with assault on Conrad Dersch with intent to kill, was arraigned before Justice Mershon this morning for trial but Poladnaski at once presented an affidavit for a change of venue which was granted and the case was sent to

Justice G. R. Schultz. The trial was set for next Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock and Poladnaski went back to jail in default of $500 bond.

Dersch's condition is such that it would have been impossible to hold the trial this morning and the preliminary hearing would have been postponed even if Poladnaski had not taken a change of venue.

Dersch is reported to be steadily improving but it will be at least a week yet before he will be able to return to this city to appear at the trial and it is possible that the trial may again have to be postponed on account of his condition."

Brazil Daily Times, Wednesday, March 16, 1910, page 1:

"Conrad Dersch, the victim of Albert Polaski in an attack at the Farmer's Hotel a few weeks ago, is improving. He was taken from the Union Hospital to his home at Glenn. The attending physicians say that his recovery is marvelous for a man of Dersch's age. However, it is not believed that he will fully recover as the membrane beneath his skull is believed to be injured. Polaski, his assailant, is still in jail."

Brazil Weekly Democrat, Thursday morning, March 24, 1910:

"Albert Poladnaski, who is charged with assault on Conrad Dersch with intent to kill, entered a plea of not guilty when arraigned today and was sent back to jail to await his trial."

Brazil Weekly Democrat, Thursday morning, March 24, 1910, page 3:

"POLADNASKI BOUND OVER TO CLAY CIRCUIT COURT

Albert Poladnaski, who is charged with assault and battery on Conrad Dersch with intent to kill, was arraigned before Justice G. R. Schultz this morning for preliminary hearing. The Pole waved preliminary hearing and was bound over to the Clay circuit court. He was unable to give the $500 bond for his appearance and was sent back to jail to await his trial.

Poladnaski's trial was set for last Tuesday but Justice Schultz was confined to his home by illness and the case was postponed until this morning when he was bound over to court.

Conrad Dersch, Poladnaski's victim, is steadily improving and it is believed that he will be able to appear in the Clay circuit court when the trial is called. Poladnaski will be arraigned next Monday when all state cases are called and some future day will be set for trial. Dersch has sufficiently recovered to be moved from the Union hospital at Terre Haute to his home in Seelyville."

Brazil Daily Times, Wednesday, April 13, 1910, page 1:

"Mrs. Conrad Dersch Decided to Take On New Companion and Leaves Her Children at Seelyville.

Mrs. Conrad Dersch, the woman over whom the trouble between Dersch and Albert Posladnaik arose which terminated in the alleged assault with intent to kill Dersch, has decided to enter in a new agreement of companionship. Finding her three small children a disadvantage in the new arrangements she took them to the boarding house of Dersch near Seelyville and left them. The children were taken to the Glenn Orphan Home in Vigo County. The board of children's guardians of Vigo is taking the matter in hand and the children will be taken from both. A home will be found for the smallest and the other two will likely be taken to the Clay County Orphan Home at Knightsville. The board of guardians here has the matter in hand and Probation Officer Edward Scheutz is awaiting definite orders before acting. Mrs. Dersch has gone to live with a man by the name of Anderson."

Brazil Daily Times, Saturday, April 16, 1910, page 1:

"Probation Officer Edward Scheutz yesterday went to East Glenn and returned with the three Dersch children who were taken to the Orphans Home at Knightsville. The children, Goldie, 9 years of age, Ellen 6 years of age, and James, 4 years of age, were all taken to the home but Officer Scheutz says that he has an excellent home for Ellen, where she will be adopted. Conrad Dersch, father of the children, is still in poor physican condition as a result of the blow on his head by Poslandniak a few months ago and was not able to support the children."

Brazil Weekly Democrat, Thursday, April 28, 1910:

"CLOSE OF COURT WAS BUSY ONE

The last case to be disposed of was that of the State against Albert Poladnaski, the Pole, on the charge of assault and battery with intent to kill, which was committed on Conrad Dersch at the home of Dersch's divorced wife in the old Farmer's hotel on east National avenue about two months go.

The charge of intent to kill was withdrawn by Deputy Prosecutor Lee and Poladnaski entered a plea of guilty on the charge of assault and battery on Dersch. After a statement of facts by Deputy Prosecutor Lee and the attorneys for the Pole, Judge Rawley assessed a fine of $5 and costs and a jail sentence of 30 days but suspended the jail sentence during his good behavior. Poladnaski was unable to pay the fine and costs which amounted to about $20 and he will have to lay in jail for about twenty days.

Poladnaski pleaded with the court for leniency, stating that he had a wife and five children in Germany and that they were to leave for this country in a couple of weeks and that he wanted his liberty so that he could earn some money to take care of them when they arrived."

Brazil, Indiana Weekly Democrat, January 30, 1913:

"The police have been doing a little investigating and have come to the conclusion that there is too much of this affinity business in this city. The reports received at police headquarters indicate that there is quite a few "soul mates" who are getting rather bold and these have been listed and the police intend to make a clean up....

The patrol wagon was sent to the home of Mrs. Cora Dersch, where she is supposed to have spent the night but she had not been there and the police understand that she has left the city and is now in Terre Haute.

Mrs. Cora Dersch, who had entertained the company at her home on Jackson street before they went to the home of Agnes Bachelor was also fined $33.60 and went to jail. Geo. Sheets, who is alleged to be Mrs. Dersch's latest affinity, was taken into custody this morning and will be given trial later."

Cora married John Christain on April 15, 1913. She married Raymond Kester later.

Brazil, Indiana Weekly Democrat, January 29, 1914:

"The police made a raid on the home of Mrs. Cora Dersch Christain, on West Knight street, and arrested Mrs. Christain, Sadie Robinson and Edward Burke on the charge of association. They pled guilty and were fined $17.60 each, which was settled. Mrs. Christain was later arraigned in Juvenile Court on the charge of contributing to the delinquency of her children, but Judge Rawley gave her another chance, and let her have the children on two months' trial."

Cora's death notice appeared in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune on Mon., May 4, 1942, page 3, and says:

"FIND WOMAN'S BODY IN WABASH RIVER

The body of Mrs. Cora Kester, 63 years old, 460 North First street was found near the bank of the Wabash river just south of Cherry street, shortly after 2:30 o'clock Sunday morning. A verdict of death due to a heart attack was returned by Deputy Coroner Robert W. Oliphant.

The body, which was removed to the Callahan Funeral Home, remained unidentified until Sunday afternoon when it was identified by the woman's son-in-law, Harold A. Derringer, 463 North First street. Orville Large, living in a houseboat at the foot of Cherry street, discovered the body lying face down in a pool of water.

The police investigation was made by lieut. Searcy and Radio Officers Vance and Stevens.

Mrs. Kester is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Dorothea Derringer, of Terre Haute, Mrs. Helen Watts of Chicago and Mrs. Irene Beauchamp of West Terre Haute; one sister, Mrs. Dora Levingston of Shepardsville; nine grandchildren and several nieces and nephews. The body will remain at the Callahan Funeral Home pending completion of funeral arrangements."

Cora is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in Terre Haute, Indiana.

The four children of Conrad and Cora (Reffett) Dersch are:

Irene G.	b. Oct. 18, 1901	d. Sep. 11, 1972 Terre Haute, Ind. married: Ivan Beauchamp

Irene's middle name could be Goldie. Her obituary appeared in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune on Tuesday, September 12, 1972 and says:

"Mrs. Irene G. Beauchamp

Services for Mrs. Irene G. Beauchamp, 70, R.R. 3, West Terre Haute, who died at 1:50 p.m. Monday in Union Hospital, will be at 1 p.m. Wednesday at the Bedino Chapel of the Valley, with the Rev. Alvin Ricklefs officiating. Burial will be in Roselawn Memorial Park. Friends may call. She was a member of Emanuel United Methodist Church. Surviving are the husband, Ivan; a daughter, Mrs. Rose Mary Bales, Libertyville, Ind.; a brother, Ernest Dersch, El Paso, Tex.; two sisters, Mrs. Dorothy Golmer and Mrs. Jude Zerwick, both of Terre Haute, three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren."

James Ernest b. July 17, 1906 d. Jan. 5, 1973 in El Paso, Texas

According to John F. Dersch, Ernie Dersch lived in Terre Haute, Indiana for awhile in his early days. He worked for a time on the Alaska pipeline. He never married.

Ernest lived for a time in Seattle, Washington at 2127 2nd Ave. He spent time in McNeil Island Penitentiary, State of Washington for a Sodomy conviction 1923-1930 that took place in Hawaii after which he returned to Terre Haute for a time. He can be found in the 1930 census for Terre Haute, Indiana living with his mother and stepfather, Cora and Raymond Kester. During the 1950 census, he was living in Tacoma, Washington, single, and working as a structural iron worker in building construction.

His Certificate of Death from Texas Deaths, 1890-1976 posted at www.labs.familysearch.org gives the following information:

Place of Death: Providence Memorial Hospital, El Paso, Texas
Usual residence: 1009 N. Stanton #12, El Paso, Texas
Name: James E. Dersch
Date of death: January 5, 1973
Male/White/Never married
Date of birth: July 17, 1906, Indiana, age 66
Usual occupation: Retired Iron Worker
Social Security #314-10-0217A
Informant: Mrs. Dorthea Gomer
Immediate cause of death: Cerebral Vascular Accident
Due to: Arteriosclerotic Cerebro Vascular Disease
Other significant conditions: Metastatic Prostatic Carcinoma
Burial: January 15, 1973 at Evergreen East Cemetery, El Paso, Texas
Martin Funeral Home

His obituary appeared in the El Paso, Texas Times on Sunday, January 14, 1973, page 54:

"DERSCH

James E. Dersch, 66, 1009 N. Stanton No. 12 passed away Friday in a local hospital. Resident of El Paso 6 months. He was a retired ironworker. Survived by sister Mrs. Dorthea Gomer, Terre Haute, Indiana. Several nieces and nephews. Graveside services will be at 3 P.M. Monday at Evergreen East Cemetery, Rev. William F. Hageman, Pastor of First Assembly of God Church officiating. Directed by Martin, 3839 Montana - 566-3955"

Helen Marie b. April 4, 1907 d. Sep. 10, 1959 in El Paso, Texas
married: William Claude Watts

Helen had TB. She recovered and became a nurse. Three obituaries were found for her, one appearing in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune, Friday, December 11, 1959 edition, page 12:

"MRS. HELEN D. WATTS

Word has been received here of the death of Mrs. Helen Dersch Watts, a former resident Thursday in El Paso, Tex. Surviving are the husband, W. C. Watts, two daughters; two sons; three sisters, Mrs. Irene Beauchamp of West Terre Haute, Mrs. Dorothy Derringer and Mrs. Julia Zerwick; a brother, Ernest Dersch of Seattle, Wash., and three foster brothers, Charles Whitesell and Harry Whitesell both of West Terre Haute and Herman Whitesell. Services and burial will be Saturday afternoon in El Paso."

Another one says:

"MRS. HELEN D. WATTS

Word was received here of the death Thursday of Mrs. Helen Dersch Watts, formerly of this city, in El Paso, Tex. Survivors include the husband, W. C. Dersch (error in newspaper article); two daughters and two sons; three sisters, Mrs. Irene Beauchamp, West Terre Haute, Mrs. Dorothy Derringer and Mrs. Julia Zerwick; a brother, Ernest Dersch, Seattle, Wash., and three foster brothers, Charles Whitesell and Harry Whitesell both of West Terre Haute, and Herman Whitesell. The body is at the Kaster and Maxon Funeral Home in El Paso and services will be held Saturday afternoon at the Ylesta Methodist Church. Burial will be in El Paso."

A third obituary appeared in the El Paso Herald-Post, El Paso, Texas on December 11, 1959 and says:

"Services Arranged for Mrs. Helen Watts

Mrs. Helen Marie Watts of 152 South Carolina drive, died yesterday in a hospital. She was 48.

Mrs. Watts was a registered nurse, owner of the Valley Community Hospital, a member of the Ysleta Methodist Church, sang in the church choir, was a member of the Pleiades Chapter of the Eastern Star, and had been an El Paso resident for 15 years.

She is survived by her husband, William C. Watts, two sons, Bill C. and Dickey Watts; two daughters, Mrs. Janet Campbell and Linda Suzanne Watts, both of El Paso; one brother, and two sisters.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. tomorrow in the Ysleta Methodist Church with the Rev. Ray B. McGrew officiating. Burial will be in the Restlawn Memorial Park under the direction of Kaster and Maxon Funeral Home."

Her Texas Certificate of Death, an image of which was obatined from www.labs.familysearch.org, gives the following information:

Place of death: Valley Community Hospital, El Paso, Texas
Usual residence: 152 S. Carolina Dr., El Paso, Texas
Name: Helen Marie Watts
Date of death: December 10, 1959 at 1:00 p.m.
Female/White/Married
Date of birth: April 4, 1907, age 48
Usual Occupation: R. N. & Owner of a Hospital
Birthplace: Indiana
Father's name: Conrad Dersch
Mother's maiden name: No Record
Informant: Mrs. Janet Campbell
Immediate cause of death: Medullary Failure; Due to: Central Nervous System Depression of unknown origin
Other significant conditions: Coronary atherosclerosis
Burial: December 12, 1959 at Restlawn Memorial Park, El Paso, Texas

I, John Earl Dersch, contacted Helen's son William C. Watts who lives in El, Paso, Texas by telephone. William was interested in anything I knew about his mother Helen. He told me that he and his three siblings, Janet, Richard and Linda, were adopted by Helen and William Watts.

Dorothy May b. May 25, 1908 d. May 18, 1993 in Terre Haute, Ind.
married: Harold A. Derringer &
Buford Gomer

Dorothy said that she provided the tombstone for her dad, Conrad Dersch, who is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, Terre Haute, Indiana.

An obituary for Dorothea M. Gomer appeared in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune-Star on Thursday, May 20, 1993, page A2:

"Dorothea M. Gomer

Dorothea M. Gomer, 84, of 1001 Springhill Road died at 6:50 p.m. Tuesday, May 18, 1993, in Countryside Nursing Center. She was born May 25, 1908, at Brazil. Her husband, Buford Gomer, died in 1990. Survivors include 14 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren; and several great-great-grandchildren. She was a member of Pleasant

Valley Community Church. Graveside services are 3 p.m. Friday in New Harmony Cemetery, with the Rev. John Sandiford officiating. There is no visitation. DeBaun Springhill Chapel assisted with arrangements."

Conrad Dersch stayed at the Vigo County Home, Terre Haute, Indiana for a brief time. The records for this institution are located at the Archives of the Vigo County Public Library in Terre Haute. The entry for "Conrod Dersch" in the Vigo County Home records, Ledger #3, page 121, dated March 14, 1923, is as follows:

Admitted 3/14-23 on order of E. H. Dickerson Lost Creek.
Born January 14-1850 in Germany
Father John Dersch born in Germany
Mother Kate Dersch born in Germany
Don't know mothers maiden name
Widowed wife dead 4 children living
Son Fred Dersch 1124 N. 6th St. Terre Haute
Daughter Julia Cervick 2524 N. 7th St. Terre Haute
Has two children in Chicago don't know address
Coal miner. "sickly"
4 years in Vigo Co. from Texas
Became a resident of Lost Ck. township in 1919
In case of death notify his children as above
Discharged 5/2-23 went to Terre Haute

Conrad Dersch died in Fayette Township, Vigo County, Indiana on January 15, 1924 at the age of 74. The immediate cause of death is listed on his Certificate of Death as Apoplexy - Nephritis. He is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Conrad's obituary appeared in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune newspaper on Wednesday, January 16, 1924, page 2 and says:

"CONRAD DERSCH.

Conrad Dersch, 74 years old, died Tuesday evening at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Ivan Beachman, nine miles north on the St. Mary's road. The body was removed to the home of another daughter, Mrs. Dan Zerweck, at Seventh and Lee avenue, from where the funeral will be held at 2 o'clock Thursday afternoon. Interment will be made in Woodlawn cemetery. He is survived by five daughters: Mrs. William Craig, Mrs. Roy Boardway of Chicago, Ill.; Mrs. Dan Zerweck, Mrs. Ivan Beachman and Miss Helen Dersch, and one son, Fred Dersch."

Another obituary appeared in the Brazil Daily Times, Wednesday, January 16, 1924, page 3:

"CONRAD DERSCH DIES AT AGE OF 74

TERRE HAUTE, Ind., Jan. 16 - Conrad Dersch, 74 years old, died yesterday at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Iva Beachman, nine miles north on the St. Mary's road. The body was taken to the Gillis funeral chapel, and will later be taken to the residence of Dan Derwich, Seventh street and Lynn avenue. The funeral will be held on Friday, but final arrangements have not been made. Dersch is survived by four daughters and one son.

Conrad Dersch was a former resident of Brazil and worked in the mines here for many years."

JOHN DERSCH FAMILY OF SPENCER COUNTY, INDIANA

Johannes Dersch was born on March 2, 1827 in Caldern, Hessen, Germany in house No. 44, a son of Hermann Dersch and his wife Maria Schneider Dersch. According to Caldern Church records, Johannes was born at midday at 11:00 o'clock in the morning. His godfather was the unmarried Johannes Vormschlag from Kernbach. Johannes was confirmed in Caldern in 1841. John immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1857. He married Margaretha Keller on February 6, 1860 in Spencer County, Indiana. Margaret was born on January 4, 1839 in Bayern (Bavaria) Germany. They were married by Andreas Miller, Pastor of Ev. St. Paul's Cong. Their marriage record can be found in the Spencer County, Indiana County Clerk's office in Rockport. John and Margaret took up farming in Harrison Township in Spencer County, Indiana and raised a family.

The children of John (Johannes) and Margaret Dersch of Spencer County, Indiana are:

John	b. Nov. 17, 1860	d. Sept. 1, 1881
Anna Katherine	b. Feb. 21, 1863	d. Nov. 17, 1947 Evansville, Indiana married: George Roessler
Daniel	b. Dec. 1, 1867	d. Nov. 2, 1900 Spencer Co., Indiana married: Mary Lottes
Kunigunda Barbara	b. Aug. 9, 1870	d. July 22, 1905
Mathias	b. May 24, 1872	d. 1954 married: Anna Marie Grass (Anna was b. 1874 Spencer Co. and d. 1938)

> (Mathias and Anna had three sons: Raymond Dersch b. June 15, 1903, William Frederick Dersch b. July 24, 1905 and John Herman Dersch b. May 25, 1910)

Margaretha Sophia	b. May 15, 1874	d. July 15, 1966 Evansville, Indiana married: William Lottes

When Margaretha Sophia was christened at the Kratzburg Trinity Church in 1874 in Spencer County, her godparents were Konrad and Margaret (Huebner) Dersch. Conrad Dersch and Margaretha Sophia Dersch were first cousins. At that time Conrad and Margaret Dersch were living nearby in Cannelton in Perry County. This information is found in the old German church records of the Kratzburg Trinity Church, now known as Kratzburg Trinity United Church of Christ near Fulda, Spencer County.

John died on May 9, 1904 and his wife, Margaret, died on January 14, 1916 in Harrison Township in Spencer County, Indiana. They are both buried in the Kratzburg Trinity Church cemetery near the town of Fulda.

(**Note:** The above information that came from the old German church records in Caldern, Germany was obtained from the research of Dr. Ulrich Stöhr, Dorfstr. 8 35099 Bottendorf, Deutschland, beginning from August 2000 until January 2003. About 1999 I, John Earl Dersch, came in contact, through internet genealogy postings, with John Vanko of Timonium, Maryland. John Vanko is a descendant of Bottendorf, Hessen, Germany Dersches. A few years ago, John Vanko had been put in contact with a Dr. Stöhr who helped John Vanko find his Dersch family in Bottendorf in the old church records there. John Vanko suggested to me of the possibility that Dr. Stöhr might go to Caldern and look for our Dersch ancestors in the old church records there. After we sent him some money to cover his expenses, Dr. Stöhr did go to the church in Caldern and did find our family in the old church records. John Vanko had assured me that Dr. Stöhr was a top-notch genealogist and we have found this to be true. We greatly appreciate the efforts of John Vanko and Dr. Ulrich Stöhr and we thank them for their time. This information is truly a remarkable find. Our family has been greatly blessed of the Lord and we thank Him for all His blessings to us.)

JOHN CHRISTIAN DERSCH OF BRAZIL AND TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

John Christian Dersch was born in Cannelton, Perry County, Indiana on January 17, 1877, the oldest child of Conrad and Margaretha (Margaret) Huebner Dersch. Margaret, called Maggie, was a daughter of August and Caroline (Habsmeyer/Meyers) Huebner.

John moved with his parents, grandmother Catherine and sister Anna from Cannelton to Brazil, Indiana in 1881. Although he moved away from southern Indiana, there was ongoing contact and visits from time to time with the family of Mathias Dersch, a cousin who lived in Spencer County, Indiana. Mathias was a son of John Dersch of Spencer County, Indiana and was known as "Uncle Math." (See JOHN DERSCH FAMILY OF SPENCER COUNTY, INDIANA)

John also associated with a half-cousin, Herman Emmert, who lived in the Brazil, Clay County, Indiana area. Herman was a son of Fred and Catherine (Roggensuess) Emmert. The Emmerts had also moved to the Brazil area from southern Indiana about the same time. John's son John F. Dersch (my dad), in his early life, used to visit the Herman Emmert household then located south of Brazil, Indiana in the country. John F., as well as myself, John Earl Dersch, visited Carl and Hila Emmert when I was young. Carl, a son of Herman Emmert, lived around Center Point, Indiana. Carl and Hila had one daughter, Mona Sue, who married John Silvers. Mona Sue Emmert Silvers knows a lot about the family history of the Emmerts and she is still living as of this writing (2024). Catherine Roggensuess was a half-sister to John Christian Dersch's mother, Margaret Huebner Dersch. Their mother, Caroline (Habsmeyer) Meyers, had married Charles Roggensuess in 1846 in St. Louis, Missouri and moved to Cannelton, Indiana. Charles and Caroline had two daughters. Louisa Roggensuess married Henry Charles Heck in Cannelton and the Hecks moved to Brazil around 1870. Catherine Roggensuess married Frederick Emmert in Cannelton and they also eventually moved to the Brazil, Indiana area. According to Emmert family history, Charles Roggensuess died of TB in St. Louis, Missouri in the early 1850s after returning there to be nursed by a sister-in-law, a Mrs. Meyers. After the death of Charles Roggensuess, Caroline married August Huebner in Perry County on October 15, 1854. Caroline and August Huebner had three children: Margaret married Conrad Dersch in 1871 at Cannelton, Christian Huebner married Anna Kiefer in 1893 in Brazil, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Huebner married William Bald in 1884 in Brazil and eventually moved to the East Chicago/Hammond, Indiana area.

John Christian Dersch worked in the coal mines for 28 years, starting when he was ten years old. He met Lillie Ellen LaFollette, a daughter of Simeon A. Lafollette and Martha Isabelle (Little) Lafollette, at a dance in Brazil and he walked her home. On one of their dates one of Lillie's stockings fell down around her ankles and was dragged in the snow and ice. She was highly embarrassed. John and Lillie were married in Brazil on October 29, 1897, where they continued to live and where John worked in the coal mine.

Wedding Day – John and Lillie

John and Lillie bought a house at 716 Central Avenue in Brazil on June 5, 1900. The 1908 Brazil, Indiana City Directory lists: “Dersch John (Lillie), miner, 716 W. Central ave.” Their family attended the Methodist Church in Brazil.

John served the city of Brazil by being on the City Council, serving the second ward, from 1910 to 1913 until he and his family moved to Terre Haute in 1913 to be closer to his newer job as a miner at the Shirkieville mine located at Shirkieville, Indiana north of West Terre Haute. According to his son, John F. Dersch, a Mr. Mooney asked him "John, you have more talent than to work in the coal mine. Why don't you come with me and get in the grocery business?" John replied, "I don't know anything about the grocery business." Mr. Mooney then said, "Come with me and I'll teach you." So, in 1915 John was given a chance to work in a grocery store owned by Mr. Mooney (Mooney Grocery), located on the southeast corner of 14th Street and Liberty avenue in Terre Haute. Shortly after that, in the summer of 1916, John joined a butcher by the name of Fred Kemnitzer and they opened up their own grocery store, called "Dersch & Kemnitzer Grocery & Meats," located at 1931 Locust street in Terre Haute.

John Christian Dersch wrote a letter on January 6, 1918 to Mathias Dersch in Spencer county, Indiana. The letter said:

"Dear cousin Math...it has been long since I have heard from you. I wrote you when we lived in Brazil but didn't hear from you. We are all well at present but Pa, he has got leakage of the heart. He is not bed fast but his condition is bad. Last December 3 years ago Brother Jake was killed in the mine. We have had several misfortunes in our family but things are looking some brighter now. We are living in Terre Haute now. We have got 3 children all boys. One 13, one 11 years old and one 9 month old.

All good hearty boys. I have quit the mines now. I quit about 3 years ago, when I took a position of Running a Branch groceries store in town here. About 18 months ago I went in to business for myself. Me and a German fellow name Fred Kemnitzer. He is a butcher by trade. We have a nice grocerie and meat market by the name of Dersch & Kemnitzer and doing a nice business. Terre Haute is a large town and has lots of amusements. We don't get lonesome here. Math I will not write much this time as I am not sure of your adress but if I hear from you I will try and write you more next time. Hoping that finds you and your folks all well. I will close hoping to hear from you soon. I am ever your cousin, John Dersch 1417 - 6 Ave. Terre Haute, Ind." (The above letter was obtained by John Earl Dersch while visiting Cornelia Dersch and her daughter, Donna Peter, in November, 1998 in Tell City, Perry County, Indiana. Cornelia is the widow of Raymond Dersch who is one of the sons of Mathias Dersch. Cornelia had the letter in her possession and let John Earl Dersch copy it.)

The following article was published in the Brazil Weekly Democrat on September 29, 1909:

"JOHN DERSCH FOR COUNCILMAN.

John C. Dersch announces in this issue of the NEWS as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for Councilman for the Second ward. Mr. Dersch is a well known young coal miner of this city and has lived in the Second ward for a number of years. Mr. Dersch has the interest of the city at heart, is fully competent to serve the people as a member of the council and we are sure that he will give the people of the Second ward splendid satisfaction if he is successful."

Brazil Weekly Democrat November 2, 1911:

"Domestic Coal Co. Makes Bad Failure

When the 140 men employed by the Domestic Coal Co. at the Kokomo mine west of the city finished work at 3:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon and came up out of the mine to receive their pay they were met by the superintendent of the company who informed the miners that the company was in the hands of a receiver and would not be able to meet the pay.

The announcement was so startling that the men were dazed for awhile, but when they realized that there was no pay for them for their work for the past two weeks there was a stormy scene and some of the more radical men urged violence. Cooler counsel prevailed and an indignation meeting of the miners was called at which a committee was appointed to consult with attorneys.

The committee is composed of Councilman John Dersch, George Foxworthy and Hugh McDonald who consulted attorneys last night and a meeting of the miners was called for the miners' headquarters in the Hill block at 3 o'clock this afternoon to take action on the situation and it is probable that attorneys will be employed to file mechanic's lien on the property of the company.

When the mine closed down last evening the company owed the 140 miners for ten days work. It is believed that the amount the company owes will average about $35 to the man which will make the company's obligations to the miners about $5,000.

The company's main offices are at Kokomo as the company is composed of Kokomo capitalists and it is understood that the receiver was asked for in the Howard county court.

The Kokomo mine had been running steadily for the past two or three months until Discovery day, October 21st, which was the first day the men had lost since last spring. In the past two weeks the mine had been idle several days.

It is claimed that the failure of the company is due to the fact that the company has been putting its coal on the market at less than the cost of production in order to compete with bituminous coal and that the proceeds from the sale of coal was pocketed by the company and now the men will have to hold the bag for their pay."

Brazil Weekly Democrat, Thursday morning, December 19, 1912:

"REFORM SHOULD BEGIN AT HOME

COUNCIILMAN DERSCH OPPOSES CARD PLAYING ORDINANCE AS AGAINST PERSONAL RIGHTS

Councilman John Chesterfield presented an ordinance to the city council last night prohibiting all card playing in cigar stores and poolrooms on Sundays but the ordinance failed to come before the council for the want of a second.

While the ordinance was not properly before the council it was discussed and Councilman Chesterfield made a short talk in which he argued that the ordinance be passed to put a stop to the card playing in cigar stores and pool rooms on Sunday. It was urged against the ordinance that if card playing on Sunday was in violation of the law statutes would cover the offense and that it was not the duty of the council to enact legislation against it.

Councilman John Dersch made the principal argument against the ordinance. He stated that while he had always been opposed to card playing and gambling in all forms he did not favor an ordinance prohibiting card playing on Sunday for the reason that it would be interfering with personal liberties of the people.

He declared that people play cards at home in front of their children and the children learn to play cards and when they grow up and play cards in public the parents set up a howl and want public card playing stopped. He asserted that this reform should begin at home and that parents should not expect the Council to correct the morals of their children."

Brazil, Indiana Weekly Democrat, March 27, 1913:

"A committee of Brazil miners who conferred yesterday with the Coal Bluff miners who walked out from the Monkey mine near Coal Bluff a few days ago, reported last evening that the Coal Bluff miners refuse to return to work until John Beck, the mine boss, has been removed and a new man put in his place.

A meeting has been arranged between a committee of the miners and the officials of the Clay County Coal Company, to be held at Terre Haute at 10 o'clock Saturday morning, at which the miners will make their demand that Beck be removed.

The Coal Bluff miners have preferred charges against Beck that he is incompetent and will ask his removal on the grounds that his negligence resulted in an explosion of gas, in which Beck and the fire boss, James Morris, were painfully burned. While the Coal Bluff miners are making these charges, the Brazil miners say that the real _____ the Coal Bluff miners have against Beck is that he gives work to too many Brazil miners.

The impression which seems to have been left with many that the trouble was over the discharge of William Sherry as fire boss and the employment of John Dersch in his place is a mistake. Mr. Dersch is simply working as fire boss temporarily until Morris recovers from his injuries, and the Coal Bluff men have no opposition to make to the appointment of Dersch, as they know that he is a competent man in this important position. They did, however, take advantage of the discharge of Sherry to make trouble for Beck, who has incurred their ill will for employing Brazil men."

Brazil Weekly Democrat, Thursday morning, April 17, 1913:

"Democrats Nominate Strong Ticket At Tuesday's Primary Election And Cast Big Vote

There were two or more candidates for all of the offices except for Councilman of the Second ward where Councilman John C. Dersch had no opposition for renomination."

The following article appeared in the Brazil Weekly Democrat, Thursday morning, May 1, 1913:

"DERSCH QUITS CITY COUNCIL
Second Ward Councilman resigns and moved his family to Terre Haute this morning
SPECIAL MEETING TONIGHT

Mayor Bray Calls Council in Session to Fill Vacancy - Democratic City Committee Will Also Have to Fill Vacancy on Democratic City Ticket.

The city council has been called to meet in special session tonight for the purpose of electing a successor to Councilman John C. Dersch, of the Second Ward, who has resigned his office on account of moving away from the city.

Owing to the mine at which he was working having practically closed down for the summer and there being little opportunity for another position at the mines in this vicinity, Mr. Dersch recently went to West Terre Haute and secured a room in one of the mines near that place. The expense of traveling back and forward and boarding while his family was in this city, was so heavy that Mr. Dersch decided to move to Terre Haute.

Mr. Dersch moved his family to Terre Haute this morning and will make his home in that city for the present. Mr. Dersch also presented his resignation as a member of the Council and Mayor Bray called the special meeting for tonight to fill the vacancy. Several persons are being considered by the Council for the place.

The departure of Mr. Dersch also leaves a vacancy on the Democratic city ticket nominated at the recent city primary. This vacancy will have to be filled by the Democratic city committee but there is plenty of time to look around for good material for the place as the election is about five months off. Several residents of the Second ward have been consulted in regard to this nomination but no action will be taken for the present."

John died an untimely death of acute pneumonia on October 7, 1919, at age 42, leaving behind his wife, Lillie, with four young boys. He died at home at 1417 Sixth Avenue, in Terre Haute. On August 8, 1919, John and Lillie had bought a house located at 1135 North 9th Street in Terre Haute for $4,400 from Charles Bennett and wife and they were getting ready to move when he fell sick. The doctor attending John during his last illness told Lillie that "he was not sick enough to die." John was well thought of by his friends and relatives and is said to have never cursed and he did not drink or smoke.

In considering the death of John C. Dersch, I, John Earl Dersch, grandson, believe it probable that John's many years working in the coal mine, breathing in the coal dust all those years, contributed to his early death. Perhaps black lung?

His obituary appeared in a Brazil Weekly Democrat, Brazil, Indiana on Thursday, October 9, 1919:

"JOHN DERSCH DIES SUDDENLY
Former Well Known Brazilian Passed Away Last Evening At Terre Haute Of Acute Pneumonia
WAS WELL KNOWN MINER

Deceased Served on City Council Here and Resigned When He Moved to Terre Haute About Seven Years ago - Had Built up Big Grocery Business.

John C. Dersch, for many years a well known coal miner of this city, passed away at the home at 1417 Sixth avenue, Terre Haute at 5:30 o'clock last evening after a short illness of pneumonia, at the age of 42 years.

News of the death of Mr. Dersch was a great shock to his many friends here. The deceased moved to Terre Haute about seven years ago and two years ago engaged in the grocery and meat business on east Locust street where he built up an extensive trade.

He had been an active leader in the United Mine Workers for many years before entering the grocery business and also took much interest in politics, being elected a member of the City Council from the Second ward on the Democratic ticket in 1909 by a large majority in the face of a heavy Republican margin in that ward. After serving about three years on the Council Mr. Dersch resigned to move to Terre Haute.

The deceased is survived by the widow, Mrs. Lillie Dersch and four sons, Herman, Gerald, Raymond and John Jr. He is also survived by the father Conrad Dersch, of Glenn Ayr; a brother, Fred Dersch, of this city, and three sisters, Mrs. Ray Boardway of East Chicago; Mrs. Wm. Craig, of Glenn Ayr, and Mrs. Dan Zerweck, of Terre Haute. He was a prominent member of the Odd Fellows."

Another obituary for Wednesday, October 8, 1919, adds: "The funeral will be held Thursday afternoon at 1:30 o'clock from the residence with burial at Cottage Hill cemetery, near Brazil."

The "Last Will and Testament of John C. Dersch," located in the Terre Haute, Indiana courthouse, says:

"I, John C. Dersch, forty-two (42) years of age, being sound in mind do, this sixth (6) day of October A.D. 1919, hereby will to my wife, Lillie E. Dersch, thirty-eight (38) years of age, my half-interest in the grocery and meat firm known as Dersch and Kemnitzer located at 1931 Locust street, Vigo County, Terre Haute, Indiana.

I hereby appoint my wife Lillie E. Dersch, to serve as executrix with out pay and without furnishing bond.

This being my last will I set my hand and seal this sixth (6) day of October A.D. 1919.

- John C. Dersch, 1417 6th Avenue, Terre Haute, Indiana

Witnesses:
Henry A. Buchholz, 1552 - 5th Ave., Terre Haute, Indiana
John R. Miller, 2318 North 13 st.
Fred Dersch, Brazil, Ind."

Proof of Will - State of Indiana, Vigo County:

"Henry A. Buckholz personally appeared before the Judge of the Vigo Circuit Court, and being duly sworn says that John C. Dersch signed his name to the above writing of date of 6th day of October, 1919, as and for his last Will, and that the same was attested and subscribed by said affiant and John R. Miller and Fred Dersch as witnesses thereto, in the presence of said Testator and by his request, and in the presence of each other, and that said Testator declared the same to be his last Will, and that said Testator was not at the time of executing said Will an infant or of unsound mind, or under coersion.

- Henry A. Buckholz

Subscribed and sworn to before me in open Court, this 5th day of November 1919.
Attest the hand and seal of the Office of said Clerk the date last aforesaid.
James J. Fagan, Clerk"

Certificate of Probate - State of Indiana, County of Vigo

"I, James J. Fagan, Clerk of the Wigo Circuit Court, certify the within last Will of John C. Dersch late of said County, deceased, has been duly admitted to probate; that its due execution was this day proved by Henry A. Buckholz whose proofs, together with such Will, have been duly recorded on pages 228 and 229 of Record No. 9 of Wills in our Office.

In witness whereof, I have hereto set my hand, and affixed the seal of said Court, this 5th day of November, 1919.

James F. Fagan, Clerk.
State of Indiana, County of Vigo

I, James F. Fagan, Clerk of the Vigo Circuit Court, do hereby certify the above to be a full, true and complete copy of the Original Last Will and Testament of John C. Dersch, deceased, late of Vigo County, State of Indiana, with the Proof of Will and Certificate of Probate thereto attached, on the said Original Will now appears on file in this office.
Witness my hand and Official Seal this 5th day of November, 1919.
James F. Fagan, Clerk V.C.C."

The children of John and Lillie (LaFollette) Dersch are:

Loren Edward Dersch	b. January 16, 1900 in Brazil, Indiana d. January 17, 1900 in Brazil, Indiana

(He is buried in Cottage Hill Cemetery. Peritonitis is listed as cause of death)

Herman Elmer Dersch	b. August 1, 1904 in Brazil, Indiana d. May 1982 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida m. Florence Pendleton (b. Feb. 5, 1906; d. Aug. 1983 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida)
Raymond Earl Dersch	b. April 7, 1907 in Brazil, Indiana d. April 30, 1973 in Indianapolis, Indiana m. Vesta Zick July 11, 1932 in Terre Haute (Vesta was b. Oct. 16, 1907 Attica, Ind. and d. Feb. 28, 1954 in Indianapolis) – No children m. Sally R. (Klausner) Morgan in Indianapolis (Sally was b. abt. 1911 and d. Nov. 12, 2002 in Indianapolis)
Gerald Eugene Dersch	b. February 21, 1917 in Terre Haute d. June 20, 1960 in Terre Haute m. Edna Lorraine Honn March 16, 1935 in Terre Haute, (Edna was b. Feb. 3, 1916 in Arcola, Illinois and d. March 30, 1998 in Terre Haute) m. Mary Schwab abt. 1956 in Terre Haute (Mary was b. July 17, 1924 and d. May 19, 1970 in Terre Haute)
John Frederick Dersch	b. September 1, 1919 in Terre Haute m. Eileen June Campbell October 5, 1941 in Terre Haute (Eileen was b. July 25, 1921 in Bridgeton, Ind. and d. Dec. 17, 2002 in Terre Haute) d. July 27, 2012 in Terre Haute

Herman Elmer Dersch, when young, worked at the Pennsylvania Railroad Car Shops in Terre Haute, Indiana. Then he worked as an electrical appliance salesman, selling electric washing machines for the power company in Terre Haute, Indiana. He also worked for Maytag washing machine company in Duluth, Minnesota, Salt Lake City, Utah (possibly) and Quincy, Illinois where he met his wife, Florence Pendleton. During World War II, he worked in Indianapolis, Indiana doing some kind of work for the war effort. He also sold insurance for Iroquois Insurance Co. and Metroplitan Life. He and his wife moved to the Detroit, Michigan area where he bought a motor oil distribution company named Verznick Oil Co. He was a dealer in Kendall Oil products. He had oil transport trucks and serviced the motor vehicle industry there in Detroit. He retired and moved to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida where he worked during his retirement years as a manager, and later a security guard, of a gated community of homes. He and Florence lived in the community called "Isle of Venice" in Ft. Lauderdale. Herman died of cancer and was cremated. His ashes were strewn over the ocean. Herman and Florence had no children.

Raymond Earl Dersch, when he was young, played baseball and liked bowling. Later, he worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad Car Shops before he worked as a debt collector for Spritz Jewelry Co. in Terre Haute, Indiana. He also worked as credit manager for several furniture stores in Terre Haute. He served in Germany during World War II, at one time driving a jeep for a general. After the war, he and his wife, Vesta, went to Arizona and started a donut shop. Upon returning to Indiana, Ray became credit manager for Hillman's Jewelry Store in Terre Haute and in Owensboro, Kentucky. He then moved to Indianapolis where he and a partner started their own collection agency, working for various Jewelry stores there. After Vesta's death due to cancer in 1954 he met his second wife, Sally, at Rost Jewelry Store in Indianapolis. Ray suffered from emphysema for many years and died after suffering a stroke in April 1973. He is buried in Roselawn Memorial Park in Terre Haute, next to his wife, Vesta. Ray had no children.

Gerald Eugene Dersch liked to play baseball as a kid. At age 16 he joined the government sponsored Civilian Conservation Corps. (CCC). Dressed in a CCC uniform, he served on Catalina Island, off the California coast, during floods, as well as other locations. After he came back to Terre Haute, he married Edna Honn in 1935 and had a daughter, Shirley.

The following article appeared in a Terre Haute, Indiana newspaper (date unknown):

"Gerald Dench, 12 years old, 1417 Sixth avenue, was another that had a narrow escape from death or serious injury Friday morning. The lad was hanging on a Tulley Oil company truck at Fifteenth street and Sixth avenue, when the driver, Walter F. Werremeyer, 736 North Sixth street, backed the truck back onto the youth and his sled.

Fortunately the boy and the sled were in such a position that the heavy rear wheels of the truck passed on each side of him. Werremeyer, who took the boy to his home, reported to the police that he did not think he was injured to any extent."

An article in the Terre Haute, Indiana Saturday Spectator on July 14, 1945 says:

"Gerald E. Dersch, 28 years old, 1319 Second avenue, was appointed to the Terre Haute police department and was immediately sworn in as a patrolman with temporary rating by the board of public works and safety (this past Wednesday). He is married and has one son.' (should have said one daughter)

Another undated article from a Terre Haute newspaper, from the scrapbook of Lillie E. Dersch:

"WINDOW PEEPER HELD FOR POLICE

"After receiving a telephone call from Gerald E. Dersch, 1107 North Thirteenth Street, that he had caught a window peeper, police went to his home and arrested Hubert Paul Ross, 29 years old, 2928 North Thirteenth Street, about 10:30 o'clock Saturday night. Ross was charged with vagrancy and held for investigation.

When police arrived at the Dersch residence, Ross was being held by his captor at the point of a gun.

Noticing a 1929 model Ford circling the block, the driver seemingly watching his house, Dersch told police he turned out the lights. The automobile stopped near Thirteenth Street and Second Avenue. Someone alighted, walked toward his home and started looking in the window. Dersch nabbed him.

Ross told police that he was driving to work and saw two women undressing in a house along the block. He went back to the Dersch residence, where he thought he had seen it, to look. Dersch grabbed him."

Although Gerald wanted to serve his country during World War II, he could not because of health reasons. He had received an injury during childhood when a truck backed up over him. During the war he served on the Terre Haute, Indiana police department. After the war, he began working for Stran Steel Corp. in Terre Haute as a Security Guard. He worked for Stran Steel until his death in 1960.

Gerald was proud of the horse that he owned, named Sugar. He boarded Sugar at a stables located on East Poplar Street in Terre Haute. He was a member of a horse riders club that marched in the 4th of July parade each year through the downtown area of Terre Haute.

Gerald married his second wife, Mary Schwab, about 1956 and started a second family. He died in 1960 in the hospital from complications after surgery to correct a hole in his diaphragm. This condition was believed to have been caused by his boyhood accident with the truck. Gerald is buried in Roselawn Memorial Park, Terre Haute, Indiana. His obituary, appearing in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune in the Tuesday June 21, 1960 edition, page 2, says:

"GERALD DERSCH
Gerald Dersch, 43 years old, of 2204 Lafayette avenue, died Monday at St. Anthony's Hospital. Surviving are the widow, Mrs. Mary Schwab Dersch; two daughters, Mrs. Shirley Westfall of Cory and Miss Jerri Lynn Dersch at home; a son, Gerald Eugene Dersch, also at home; his mother, Mrs. Lillie Dersch of Terre Haute; three brothers, Herman of Detroit, Raymond of Indianapolis and John Dersch of Terre Haute, and a grandson. The body is at the Bedino Chapel of the Valley where friends may call after 6

o'clock Tuesday evening. Funeral services will be held there at 1:30 o'clock Thursday afternoon with Rev. Clyde Rodabaugh officiating. Burial will follow in Roselawn Memorial Park."

The Funeral Home Remembrance card handout says the following:

Memory of Gerald E. Dersch
Born February 21, 1917
Passed Away June 30, 1960
Services: Bedino Chapel Of The Valley, Thursday, June 23, 1960, 1:30 p.m.
Officiating: Reverend Clyde Rodabaugh
Resting Place: Roselawn Memorial Park

The child of Gerald and Edna Dersch is:

Shirley Ann Dersch
b. September 29, 1935
m. Paul Westfall January 28, 1956 in Terre Haute and divorced 1961. (Paul was b. May 15, 1934 in Corey, Ind. They have one son, Gregory Allen Westfall b. May 6, 1957 in Terre Haute)
m. Kenneth D. Tingley March 23, 1984 in Terre Haute (Kenneth was b. Nov. 16, 1935 in Terre Haute; died July 16, 2017)
d. Dec. 12, 2010 in Terre Haute

The following wedding announcement appeared in the Terre Haute, Indiana Saturday Spectator on January 21, 1956:

"Westfall-Dersch

The wedding of Miss Shirley Dersch and Paul Westfall will be held next Saturday, Jan. 28, at 7:30 o'clock in the evening. The double ring ceremony is to be held at the First Church of God, Fourteenth Street at Third Avenue, with the Rev. James H. Woodward, pastor, officiating. The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Dersch, Fort Harrison road, and the bridegroom is the son of Mrs. Laura Westfall and Dewey Westfall, both of Cory, Ind.

Given in marriage by her father, Miss Dersch will be attended by Miss Alice Ann Strole as maid of honor and Miss Darlene Brown, bridesmaid. They will be dressed in gowns to harmonize with the bridal colors of teal blue, silver and white. The bride's bouquet will be white carnations and amazonics and her bridesmaids will carry red roses.

The brother of the bridegroom, Gerald Westfall, will act as best man. John Dersch and Ray Dersch will be the ushers. Preceding and during the ceremony there will be organ music by Mrs. Lenora Miller, who will play "Because," "Always," "The Lord's Prayer," and "Indian Love Call.

Immediately following the marriage a reception will be held in the Crawford lounge of the Y. W. C. A. Friends and relatives are invited to attend both wedding and reception.

Mrs. John Dersch, Mrs. John Bailey Jr., Miss Alice Oberley and Miss Betty Knapper will serve at the reception.

The young couple will have a short wedding trip in the west and after their return will make their home in Terre Haute.

Miss Dersch attended Gerstmeyer High school and was graduated from Cory High school. She is employed as dental assistant to Dr. Ralph E. Laybold. Mr. Westfall, a graduate of Cory High school, is at present associated with Claude Harr at Cory, Ind."

Shirley and Paul were divorced on September 6, 1961, according to an article in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune, Thursday, September 7, 1961 and notes from Lillie Ellen LaFollette Dersch. Shirley's obituary appeared in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune-Star on Tuesday, December 14, 2010:

"Shirley A. Dersch Tingley

Shirley A. Dersch Tingley, 75, of Terre Haute, went to be with her Lord on Dec. 12, 2010. She was born in Terre Haute, on Sept. 29, 1935, to Gerald E. and Edna L. (Honn) Dersch. She was a graduate of Cory High School and Eastern Illinois University, and was an active member of Greenwood Baptist Church. She was preceded in death by her parents.

She is survived by her husband, Kenneth D. Tingley; one son, Greg Westfall; and four stepchildren, Anthony Tingley and wife Barbara, Cindy Dean and husband Mike, Kristi Patterson and husband Mike, and Kenneth A. Tingley and wife Lori; 11 grandchildren, Josh and Aaron Doty, Jacob and Brooke Tingley, Lacy, Benjamin, and Charlie Patterson, Kenneth A. Tingley Jr., James Tingley, and Billy and John Carnell; one great-grandchild, Aiden Carnell; one uncle, John F. Dersch of Terre Haute; one cousin, John E. Dersch of DeKalb, Ill.; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be 10 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 16, 2010, in DeBaun Springhill Chapel, 85 E. Springhill Drive, with the Rev. David Smith officiating. Burial will be at Roselawn Memorial Park. Calling hours will be on Wednesday from 4 to 8 p.m. Online condolences can be made at: www.debaunfuneralhomes.com."

The children of Gerald and Mary Dersch are:

Jeri Lynn Dersch	b. June 16, 1956 in Terre Haute m. Dennis Dunham July 4, 1975 in Terre Haute and divorced 1978 m. Jon Gilliland December 14, 1986 in Seaside, Oregon (Jon was b. Feb. 17, 1956 in Oregon. Jon and Jeri have two children: Erik Gilliland b. June 16, 1987 and Kirstin Gilliland b. December 15, 1988 both born in Portland, Oregon) d. May 12, 2019 in Grande Ronde Hospital, La Grande, Oregon

Jeri and Dennis Dunham were divorced in 1978. Jeri Lynn was paralyzed in a swimming/diving accident in the state of Oregon. She and her husband, Jon Gilliland, have devoted their lives to working with the handicapped in a Christian atmosphere.

Below is an email that Jeri Lynn sent to me, John Earl Dersch, on Saturday, February 16, 2002:

"Boy, where do I begin. As you know both of my folks died by the time I was 13. Uncle Jack attempted to keep in touch. I now appreciate that very much, but we moved around quite often. Gary, Jackie and myself lived with Bonnie, my oldest sister. I find it hard to believe that she took us in when she herself was so young. Anyway, life wasn't easy....I was very rebelious. Pretty much went in my own (the wrong) direction thru high school and after. After graduating I married my H.S. love. It was basically not the thing to do, both of us were too young. It was in 1978 that I left IN and landed in OR.

I love it here and lived single and wild until 1986 when I had a diving accident in which I broke my neck leaving me paralized from the breastline down. UGH. But, God is good, even when one denies His existance for so long. I had many friends that had a walk with the Lord, but I couldn't get into it. Thank goodness they didn't give up on their prayers and my salvation. Laying on ones back in traction for months gives one time to think. My motto is: when you hit rock bottom you run into God. It seems that when tragedy hits us the hardest we begin to question God. So, that's when I first met Jesus.

My husband, Jon is in the medical field. At that time he was in rehabilitation nursing. Just when I thought any sort of romance was totally gone from my life God gave me Jon. We now have two children, Erik is 14, born on my 31st B-day, and Kirstin is 13. Within 3 years of a spinal cord injury I incurred a husband and two kids. Whew.

We live in a very small county in Eastern OR, about 7000 people in the whole county. Jon is employed at the local hospital. I am employed with a custom log home builder. Obviously both kids are still in school...Jr. High and High School. We keep very busy with our respective jobs, remodeling a 100 yr. old farm house, and running the various sports and music circuits with the kids. So, that's the run down."

The following obituary for Jeri is copied from the Wallowa County, Oregon Chieftain online:

"Jeri Lynn Gilliland, 62 of La Grande, passed away on Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at Grande Ronde Hospital. A Memorial Service will be held in Enterprise sometime in June. A notice will be sent later.

Jeri was born on June 16, 1956, in Terre Haute, Indiana to Gareld and Mary Ellen (Schwab) Dersch. She resided in Terre Haute, Indiana; Hermiston, Oregon; Portland, Oregon; Enterprise, Oregon and La Grande, Oregon. She graduated from Terre Haute North Vigo High School. She served our country while in the United States Air Force serving as a Military Policeman. She married Jon Gilliland and they were married for 32 years.

Jeri was employed at Pendleton Woolen Mills, Terry Trailers, and Department of Human Services counseling disabled couples. She enjoyed photography, and horseback riding. Her greatest achievement was finding her husband, Jon, and having two children after breaking her neck and becoming paralyzed and doctors telling her she would never have children.

Jeri is survived by her husband, Jon; children, Erik Gilliland (Taylor) of Athena, Oregon, Kirstin Gilliland (Ian Buzbee) of La Grande, Oregon, and Jillian Tye, of La Grande, Oregon; sisters, Beth DeFrance (John) of Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Sue Weger of Terre Haute, Indiana; brothers, Gary Dersch and Jack Dersch of Terre Haute, Indiana and five grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents, Gareld and Mary Ellen; sisters, Bonnie England and Kay Jones and brother, Wayne Compton."

Gerald Eugene Dersch Jr. b. August 9, 1958 in Terre Haute
m. Cindy Rollings June 27, 1981 in Terre Haute
(Cindy was b. June 19, 1963 in Terre Haute. Cindy and Gary have no children)

JOHN FREDERICK DERSCH

John Frederick Dersch was born on September 1, 1919 at 1417 Sixth Avenue in Terre Haute, Indiana, the youngest of four surviving sons born to John Christian Dersch and Lillie Ellen (LaFollette) Dersch. He was raised in Terre Haute and attended Deming elementary school, McLean Jr. High School and Gerstmeyer "Tech" High school.

At about ten years of age he gave his heart to Jesus Christ, answering the call of God when his Sunday School teacher, Mr. Longbrake, a city policeman, spoke one Sunday evening at the Church of God located at 14th and Third Avenue in Terre Haute where he attended. After the service John went home and woke his mother up, as she had already gone to bed, to tell her that he "got saved" that evening.

In 1934 he attended an outdoor tent revival that was being held by Rev. Howard Courtney at the corner of 13th and Elm streets in Terre Haute with a friend Harry Hart. They sat on the front row. Rev. Courtney asked the boys if they would like to sing in the choir and they accepted the invitation right away. This is where he first met his future wife, Eileen Campbell, who also sang in the choir. Shortly after that, John attended a party at Eileen's house, then located at 11th street and 6th Avenue, and played the game "Heavy, Heavy hangs over thy Head." A penalty he had to pay was to walk her down to the corner and back. They started going together after that. In June 1934 the church group was organized as a chartered Foursquare Gospel Church. John and Eileen were both charter members and continued their membership there throughout their lives.

John started making scrapbooks, with pictures and newspaper articles, starting in 1934 when the church was chartered. In fact, he wrote up many of the newspaper articles himself for the church and submitted them to the newspaper in Terre Haute to be published. He made so many trips to the newspaper office that the employees knew him by name and he established a good relationship with them.

John also wrote a history of the Terre Haute Foursquare Church.

John was employed by Postal Telegraph-Cable Co. in 1936 as a messenger boy. He was eventually promoted to cashier, bookkeeper, teletype operator and worked there until he entered into the Army Air Corps. in July 1943. He married Eileen June Campbell on

October 5, 1941 in Terre Haute and he became a father when his son and only child, John Earl Dersch, was born on April 30, 1946.

During World War II he served in the European Theatre of Operations with the 15th Air Force, 464th Bomb Group, 777th Squadron, as a crew member (nose gunner) on a B-24 Liberator bomber, based at Pantanella Air Base near Naples, Italy. After 50 missions he returned to civilian life in July 1945, sailing home on the MARIPOSA, arriving in Boston Harbor. John was mustered out at Greensboro, North Carolina.

In August of 1945 he was employed by Citizens Independent Telephone Company in Terre Haute as the supervisor of business office operations and continued to work there until his retirement from General Telephone Company on October 1, 1982. During his business career he was a member of the Jaycees and the noon Optimist Club in Terre Haute, Indiana. He served as president of the noon Optimist Club from 1962 to 1963. He also served on Mayor Ralph Tucker's Civic Advisory Committee, Postmaster Frank Miklozek's Industry Committee, Huston Izaak's Industrial Training Committee and was a member of William Penn Masonic Lodge (3rd degree) and Scottish Rite (32nd degree). He was also a member of Terre Haute V. F. W. Post #972. (Source: John Frederick Dersch, August 13, 2000)

John passed away in Union Hospital in Terre Haute, Indiana on July 27, 2012 as a result of chronic kidney failure at the age of 92. In other words, his body just wore out after living a very long and happy life.

John's obituary was prepared by his son and published in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune-Star on Sunday, July 29, 2012:

"John F. Dersch

TERRE HAUTE — John Frederick Dersch, 92, of Terre Haute, passed away at 12:30 p.m. Friday, July 27, 2012, in Union Hospital. He was born on Sept. 1, 1919, in Terre Haute, the youngest son of John Christian Dersch and Lillie Ellen (LaFollette) Dersch. While growing up on 6th Avenue, he attended Deming Elementary, McLean Jr. High and Gerstmeyer "Tech" High School.

At about 10 years of age, John gave his heart to Jesus Christ, answering the call of God when his Sunday School teacher spoke one Sunday evening at the Church of God then located at 14th and 3rd Avenue in Terre Haute. This experience made a profound impression on him and was the beginning of his life-long commitment to Christian service.

In 1934 John and a friend attended an outdoor tent revival that was being held by the Rev. Howard Courtney at the corner of 13th and Elm streets in Terre Haute. While sitting on the front row, the Rev. Howard Courtney asked the boys if they would like to sing in the choir and they accepted the invitation right away. This is where he first met his future wife, Eileen Campbell, who also sang in the choir. When the group was organized as a chartered Foursquare Gospel Church in June 1934, John and Eileen were charter members. John and Eileen were married on Oct. 5, 1941.

John was employed by Postal Telegraph-Cable Company in 1936 as a messenger boy, and also served as a cashier, bookkeeper and teletype operator until he entered into the Army Air Corps in July 1943. During World War II, John served in the European Theatre of Operations with the 15th Air Force, 464th Bomb Group, 777th Squadron, as a crew member (nose gunner) on a B-24 Liberator bomber, based at Pantanella Air Base near Naples, Italy. After 50 missions he returned to civilian life in July 1945. The following month he was employed by Citizens Independent Telephone Company in Terre Haute as the supervisor of business office operations until his retirement from General Telephone Company on Oct. 1, 1982.

During his business career he was a member of the Jaycees and the noon Optimist Club in Terre Haute, serving as president of the Club from 1962 to 1963. He also served on Mayor Ralph Tucker's Civic Advisory Committee, Postmaster Frank Miklozek's Industry Committee, and Huston Izaak's Industrial Training Committee.

John was a member of William Penn Masonic Lodge 727, Free and Accepted Masons (3rd degree) and Scottish Rite Valley of Terre Haute (32nd degree). He also was a member of Terre Haute Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 972. John attended Victory Christian Center and loved to play bingo at McDonald's and West Terre Haute Senior Citizens Center.

John is survived by his son, John Earl Dersch (Linda), DeKalb, Ill.; grandson, C. Edward Dersch (Stephanie), Manteno, Ill.; grandson, Brian Dersch (Antonette), San Diego; granddaughter, Amy Dersch, Sycamore, Ill.; four great-grandchildren, Abigail, Gabrielle, Madeline and Natalie Dersch, Manteno.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Eileen, on Dec. 17, 2002.

Visitation will be at DeBaun Springhill Chapel, 85 E. Springhill Drive, on Tuesday, July 31, 2012, from 4 until 8 p.m with a Masonic memorial service conducted by William Penn Lodge 727 F. & A.M. Funeral services will be at the funeral home on Wednesday, Aug. 1, 2012, at 1:30 p.m. with the Rev. Dennis Campbell officiating. Burial will follow at Roselawn Memorial Park with military honors provided by Lawton-Byrum Post 972 VFW.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions be given to the charity of your choice."

EILEEN JUNE CAMPBELL DERSCH

Eileen June Campbell was born on July 25, 1921 in Bridgeton, Indiana. She made up her own biography which is as follows:

"Eileen June Campbell was born on July 25, 1921 at Bridgeton, Parke County, Indiana. She was the seventh of eight children born to Ona Otis and Minnie Mae (Low) Campbell.

Her family moved from Bridgeton to North Terre Haute, Indiana in 1926 when she was five years old. She attended Otter Creek elementary school in North Terre Haute in the first grade when she was six years old. She attended Lange elementary school for one year when she was in the 6th grade. She then attended McClean Jr. high school through the seventh and eighth grades. She attended Gerstmeyer "Tech" high school, graduating in June 1939. After high school she worked at Quaker Maid, A&P food processing plant in Terre Haute.

She married John Frederick Dersch in Terre Haute on October 5, 1941. They were married by the Rev. William J. Moore, pastor of the Foursquare Gospel Church in Terre Haute.

In 1943 she left Quaker Maid and joined her husband in Belleville, Illinois, where he was stationed at Scott Field at that time. She returned home to Terre Haute for a period of time until she rejoined her husband in Holyoke, Massachusetts while he was stationed there at Westover Field. After he left for overseas duty during World War II, she returned home again to Terre Haute until his return in July 1945.

On April 30, 1946 their son, John Earl Dersch, was born in St. Anthony Hospital in Terre Haute.

She was further employed by Chesty Foods, Columbia Records and the Vigo County School Corporation. She worked for the School Corporation for eleven years as a secretary until her retirement in 1978.

She still resides with her husband in Terre Haute, Indiana."

(Source: Eileen June (Campbell) Dersch, August 13, 2000)

Eileen died on December 17, 2002 after a long illness. Her obituary, appearing in the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune-Star on Thursday, December 19, 2002, page 2, says:

"EILEEN JUNE DERSCH

Eileen June Dersch, 81, of Terre Haute died Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2002, in Union Hospital. She retired from the Vigo County School Corp. as a secretary in 1978, after 11 years of service. She was born July 25, 1921, in Bridgeton the seventh of eight children, to Ona Campbell and Minnie Low Campbell. Survivors include her husband, John Frederick Dersch, whom she married Oct. 5, 1941; one son, John Earl Dersch and his wife, Linda of DeKalb, Ill., one sister, Sylvia Ames of Brazil; two brothers, Merritt Campbell of Terre Haute and Esmond Campbell of South Bend; three grandchildren, Charles Edward Dersch and his wife, Stephanie of Manteno, Ill., and Brian and Amy Dersch of DeKalb; four great-grandchildren, Abigail, Gabrielle, Madeline and Natalie Eileen Dersch, all of Manteno; and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents; one brother, Floyd Campbell; and three sisters, Marjorie Boatman, Beatrice Snider Meng and Opal McCullough Fischer. Her family moved to Terre Haute, where she attended local schools and graduated from Gerstmeyer High School in 1939. Upon graduation, she worked at Quaker Maid food processing plant and later for Chesty Foods and Columbia Records. She followed her husband to various locations in the United States while was in the service during World War II. She was a charter member of Foursquare Gospel Church and attended Victory Christian Center. Services are 10:30 a.m. Saturday in DeBaun Springhill Chapel, with the Rev. Tom Smith officiating. Burial is in Roselawn Memorial Park. Visitation is 5 to 8 p.m. Friday."

During the funeral, the Rev. Tom Smith officiated with his wife, Merrillyn, singing three songs: My Tribute, Center of My Joy, Day Star. Pallbearers were Charles Edward Dersch, Brian Dersch, Rev. John W. Fischer jr., Rev. Dennis Campbell, Doyne Snider and Darrell Campbell. After leaving the DeBaun Springhill Chapel, the funeral procession proceded to Roselawn Memorial Park. The graveside service was actually conducted in the new mausoleum, heated and beautifully decorated for the Christmas season, at the cemetery. Following the committal service a noon meal was graciously provided by the Foursquare Gospel Church on North 13th Street, with sister Opal German in charge.

The child of John and Eileen (Campbell) Dersch is:

John Earl Dersch	b. April 30, 1946 in Terre Haute m. Linda Ann (Radtke) Bobish May 20, 1978 in DeKalb, Illinois (Linda was b. June 22, 1947 in San Diego, Calif.)

JOHN EARL DERSCH

John Earl Dersch was born on April 30, 1946 at St. Anthony's Hospital, Terre Haute, Indiana. As a boy he attended Deming Elementary School and from 1960-64 he attended Gerstmeyer "Tech" High School in Terre Haute. He attended Indiana State University for two years before being drafted into the U.S. Army on December 15, 1966. While in the service he was stationed at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina for basic training and then at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas for Advanced Individual Training. He then was assigned to a Hawk Missile Battalion (8th Battalion, 7th Artillery) at Ft. Bliss, El Paso, Texas. John was trained to be a medic but after arriving at Ft. Bliss he was assigned to be Officer's Records Clerk in the battalion personnel office. While being stationed at Ft. Bliss, John attended the local Foursquare Church in El Paso and made many friends and enjoyed wonderful Christian fellowship. After John's honorable discharge in December 1968, he returned home to Terre Haute and worked at the local J. I. Case factory. From August 1971 to May 1975 John attended Mt. Vernon Bible College in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. The small campus was located on beautiful scenic rolling hills in central Ohio near the little town of Bangs and close to the town of Mt. Vernon. After John's graduation with a B. A. in Bible, he moved to DeKalb, Illinois where he worked as Minister of Visitation and Church Business Coordinator from 1975-1980 at the DeKalb Foursquare Church. In February 1978 he was ordained at Angelus Temple, Los Angelus, California during the annual convention of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. On May 20, 1978 John was married to Linda Ann (Radtke) Bobish, the daughter of Harley and Mildred (Houghtby) Radtke. Shortly after his marriage John adopted Linda's son, Ed, as his own. In 1980 he became a custodian at Northern Illinois University and retired from there in January 2006. In 1979 and 1981, John became the proud father of Brian John Dersch and Amy Lynne Dersch. John has kept his ministerial credentials current and has held a district appointment for many years. He became eligible for his 25-year ministerial pin in the year 2000. One of John's proudest moments came on December 18, 1993 when he had the honor and privilege of performing the marriage ceremony for his son and daughter-in-law, Charles Edward Dersch and Stephanie Laurel Baker. Then again, John performed the wedding ceremony of his son Brian, who married Antonette Marie Tassano on August 13, 2011 at Calumet Parke, San Diego, California, at a beautiful outdoor wedding overlooking the Pacific Ocean. John also officiated at the beautiful wedding of his daughter Amy, who married Jeremy Wayman Hernandez on June 13, 2015 at Chapel in the Pines near Sycamore, Illinois. John's hobbies are fishing, investing and genealogy. In August 1999, John was elected president of the Campbell reunion. As president, he made a goal to make the Campbell family tree available to members of the family who would like a copy. This tree was made available at the 75th Anniversary celebration of the Campbell Reunion on August 12, 2000 at Forest Park in Brazil, Indiana and has since then been updated. John continues to serve as Vice-President of the reunion. He also continues to pursue his genealogy hobby and has helped numerous friends and relatives trace their ancestors back in time. John continues to serve with the "tech" team at the church he attends, Christ Community Church in DeKalb.

LINDA ANN RADTKE DERSCH

Linda Ann Radtke was born June 22, 1947 at Quintard Hospital, San Diego, California. Her parents, Harley and Mildred "Millie" (Houghtby) Radtke were living there after her father was discharged from the Navy after World War II. At the age of 3 1/2 the family moved to Illinois. She attended Somonauk, IL elementary school until the middle of 4th grade, Shabbona, IL elementary school until the middle of 6th grade, when the family moved to Waterman, IL, where Linda graduated from Waterman High School in 1965. She attended Luther College in Decorah, IA for one year, then Western Illinois University in Macomb, IL for one year. The next year was spent as a secretary in the Education Department of Northern Illinois University (NIU) in DeKalb, IL. She then moved to Tampa, FL to live with her future in-laws while her fiance was in Viet Nam. While there, she worked as a bookkeeper for a discount department store. Linda married Charles Ronald Bobish in Honolulu, HI on August 17, 1968 while Ron was on R&R from Viet Nam. After Ron was shot in Viet Nam, Linda moved to Silver Springs, MD to be close to him while he was recuperating in Walter Reed Hospital. After being medically discharged from the Army, they moved to Tampa, FL where their son Ed was born March 8, 1970. In July 1970, Linda and Ron were divorced, and Linda and Ed moved back to Waterman, IL. Linda worked as a secretary for a special admissions program for two years at NIU, quit work for a year to complete her degree, effective August 1973, in Accountancy from Northern Illinois University. Linda worked as a Financial Aid Counselor from 1973 - 1979 for the same program. In 1975, Linda became Treasurer of the Foursquare Gospel Church in DeKalb, IL, a position she held until she retired from this position October 2014. During this time, Linda met John Earl Dersch, whom she married May 20, 1978. She quit her full time employment when Brian was born. After Amy was two years old, Linda went back to work as a Financial Aid Counselor at the Student Financial Aid Office at Northern Illinois University, then was promoted to Assistant Director, then Senior Assistant Director. Her job responsibilities entailed supervising and defining the operational aspects of processing financial aid. Linda was very active in the state financial aid professional organization, ILASFAA, and has been named as a committee chair for the Illinois Student Assistance Commission Operations and Rules Committee. This committee consisted of 10 financial aid representatives around the state that met with ISAC representatives in an advisory capacity. She also attended the user's conference annually, which was hosted by the software vendor for the financial aid software that was used at NIU. Linda retired from Northern Illinois University on April 30, 2007 and is enjoying her retirement by spending time with family and grandchildren, traveling and reading.

The children of John and Linda Dersch are:

Charles Edward Dersch	b. March 8, 1970 at McDill AFB, Tampa, Fla. Adopted. m. Stephanie Laurel Baker Dec. 18, 1993 in St. John's United Church of Christ, Peotone, Ill. (Stephanie was b. Oct. 20, 1970 in Little Company of Mary's Hospital, Evergreen Park, Ill. They have four daughters: Abigail b. Aug. 26, 1996; Gabrielle b. July 24, 1998; Madeline b. June 22, 2001; Natalie b. June 22, 2001 (identical twins). Ed and his family live in Manteno, Illinois.
Brian John Dersch	b. November 25, 1979 in DeKalb, Illinois m. Antonette Marie Tassano Aug. 13, 2011 at San Diego, Calif. Toni was b. Sept. 4, 1984 at Walnut Creek, Ca. Brian and Toni have a daughter, Nora Grace Dersch who was born June 1, 2016 in San Diego, California. As of this date (2024) Brian lives in Redmond, Oregon. Brian and Toni are divorced.
Amy Lynne Dersch	b. September 19, 1981 in DeKalb, Illinois m. Jeremy Wayman Hernandez June 13, 2015 at Chapel in the Pines, Sycamore, Ill. Jeremy was born March 6, 1982 in DeKalb, Ill. Amy and Jeremy have a daughter, Alexandria June Hernandez who was born August 12, 2016 in DeKalb, Illinois. As of this date (2024) Amy and her family live in DeKalb, Illinois.